

A N
E P I S T L E
T O

A Gentleman of the *Temple*.

Occasioned by

Two TREATISES just published,

W H E R E I N

The F A L L of M A N

Is differently Represented ; Viz.

I. Mr. LAW's *Spirit of PRAYER*,

II. The Bishop of LONDON's *Appendix*.

S H E W I N G,

That, according to the plainest Sense of Scripture, the
Nature of the FALL is greatly mistaken in the latter.

By John Byrom

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. INNYS and J. RICHARDSON,
in *Pater-noster Row*.

M.DCC.LII.

[Price Six-pence.]

EPISTLE

TO

A Gentlemen of the Temple

Occasioned by

Two THIRTIETHS just published

W H T

The FALL of MAN

In a new and improved Edition

I. Mr. Law's Spirit of Prayers

II. The Bishop of London's Appendix

Sheweth

That according to the plain sense of Scripture the
Fall of Man is greatly mistaken in the former

R67148

L O N D O N

Printed for W. Innes and J. Richardson
in Pall-mall

MDCCLXXII

[Price six pence]

314³ [4]
AN
EPISTLE

TO
A Gentleman of the *Temple*.

SIR, upon casting an attentive Look
Over your Friend the learned SHERLOCK'S
Book,

One Thing occurs about the FALL of MAN,
That does not suit with the *Mosaic* Plan;
Nor give us fairly, in its full Extent,
The Scripture Doctrine of that dire Event.

When tempted ADAM, yielding to Deceit,
Presum'd of the forbidden Tree to eat,
The Bishop tells us, *That he did not die* :
Pray will you ask him, Sir, the Reason why ?
Why he would contradict the sacred Text ?
Where Death to Sin so *surely* is annex ?
The Day thou eatest—are the Words, you know ;
And yet, by his Account, it was not so :
Death did not follow, tho' it surely wou'd :
How will he make this hardy Comment good ?

Sentence, says he, *was respited*—But, pray,
Where does the Scripture such a Saying say ?

What Word that means to *respite* or *revoke*
Appears in all that God or *Moses* spoke ?

It will be said, perhaps, that it appears,
That *Adam* liv'd above Nine hundred Years
After his Fall—True—But what *Life* was *that* ?
The very *Death*, Sir, which his *Fall* begat.
The Life that *Adam* was created in,
Was lost the *Day*, the *Instant*, of his Sin.
Just as the rebel Angels, when they fell,
Were *dead* to Heav'n, altho' *alive* to Hell :
So Man, no longer breathing heav'nly Breath,
Fell to this Life, and died the *Scripture Death*.

While in the State of Innocence he stood,
He was all living, beautiful, and good :
But when he fed on the forbidden Fruit,
Whereof Corruption was the latent Root,
He *dy'd* to Paradise, and, by a Birth
That should not have been rais'd, he *liv'd* to Earth ;
Fell into bestial Flesh, and Blood, and Bones,
Amongst the Thorns and Briars, Rocks and Stones.
That which had cloath'd him when a Child of
Light,
With all its Lustre, was extinguish'd quite ;
Naked, asham'd, confounded, and amaz'd,
With *other* Eyes, on *other* Scenes he gaz'd.
All Sensibility of heav'nly Bliss
Departing from him—what a *Death* was This !

His Soul, indeed, as an immortal Fire,
Could never die, could never not desire :

But,

But, Sir, he had what glorious Angels claim,
 An *heav'nly* Spirit, and an *heav'nly* Frame;
 Form'd in the Likeness of the sacred THREE,
 He stood immortal, powerful, and free;
 Image of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*,
 The destin'd Sire of a new Heav'nly Host;
 Partner of their communicated Breath,
 A *living* Soul, unsubjected to Death.
 Since then he fell from this sublime Estate,
 Could less than Death have been his real Fate?
 No; as in Life he chose not to abide,
 It must be said, that *Adam* surely dy'd.

Say, that he dy'd not as it was foretold,
 But when Nine hundred Years and Thirty old:
 And then, if Death be Sentence for a *Fall*,
 How proves the Bishop that he dy'd *at all*?
 For if the Death he talks of be this last,
 How does *that* answer to the *Sentence* past?
 Was his Departure from *this World* the Time
 That our First Father suffer'd for his Crime?
 One rather should believe, or hope at least,
 That (so be it!) his Sufferings then ceas'd;
 And that the Life which had been lost at first,
 Was then regain'd, and he no longer curst.

If on the Bishop's 'Scutcheon, when he dies,
 (Long be the time deferr'd) the mourning Eyes
 Should read MORS VITÆ JANUA, in Paint,
 What must they think him, Sinner, *then*, or
 Saint?

Must not these Words direct them to suppose
 An End of all a Christian Bishop's Woes?
 Who, like to *Adam*, Father of Mankind,
 Had pass'd his Time of Penitence injoin'd;
 Who, like to *CHRIST*, the Second *Adam* too,
 Had always had *Redemption* in his View;
 Had taught himself and others to revive
 Form *dead in Adam* to *in Christ* alive;
 Had been as true a Shepherd to his Flock;
 As the poor Hind that really wears a Frock;
 So trod this earthly Passage, that, in Sum,
Death was to him *the Gate of Life* become.

Gate of *what* Life? Undoubtedly the same
 That *Adam* fell from, when he first became
 A Creature of this World; when first he fell,
 Thanks to Divine Foregoodness! not to *Hell*,
 But to *this Earth*—this State of Time and Place,
 Where, dead by *Nature*, Man revives by *Grace*;
 Where, tho' his *outward* System must decay,
 His *inward* ripens to eternal Day;
 Puts off th' *old Adam*, and puts on the *New*;
 And having found the *First* sad Sentence true,
 Now finds the Truth of what the *Second* said,
The Woman's Seed shall bruise the Serpent's Head.

Again—to urge the Instance that I gave,
 Attend we this good Bishop to his Grave:
 The Priest comes forth to meet the sable Hearse,
 And then repeats the well-appointed Verse;

—Verse, one would think, that might decide the
Strife:—

I AM THE RESURRECTION, AND THE LIFE—

What Life is that which JESUS is, and gives,
In and by which the true Believer lives?
That of *this World*? Then were it most absurd
To a dead Bishop to apply the Word.

'Tis that which human Nature had before;
Which being *Christ's*, *Christ only* can restore.
What *Meaning* is there, touching the Deceas'd,
Now from the *Burden of the Flesh* releas'd,
But that his Soul is going to be clad
With *heav'nly* Flesh and Blood; which *Adam* had
Before he enter'd into *that* which *Paul*
Body of Death might very justly call?

A Flesh and Blood, that, as he hints elsewhere,
Not born from Heav'n, can never enter there:
Mans of this World, whose Kingdom *Christ* dis-
claim'd,

The Life whereof is but a Life so nam'd;
A Life of *Animal* and *Insect* Breath,
That, in a *Man*, is rightly stil'd a *Death*.

Thus, Sir, throughout the *Burial Office* run,
You'll find that it proceeds as it begun.
Read any Office—*Baptism* if you will—
From first to last, you'll find the Reason still,
Why *any*, or why *all of them*, are read,
Reason of all that's either sung or said,

Is by this one great solemn Truth explain'd
 Of Life in Adam *lost*, in CHRIST *regain'd* :
 Lost at the *Fall*—not at the End of Years
 That *Adam* labour'd in this Vale of Tears,
 When Death thro' Christ was *happy*, 'tis presum'd,
 And vanquish'd *that* to which he first was doom'd.

Doom'd—not by any *Act of Wrath* in God
 (A Point wherein the Bishop seems to nod);
 No Death of *pure*, of *tainted* Life no Pain,
 Did his severe inflicting Will ordain :
 He is all Glory, Goodness, Light, and Love,
 LIFE that from *Him* no Creature can remove;
 But from *itself* it may, as *Adam* did,
 If it will choose what Light and Love forbid :
Truly forewarn'd of what would *truly* be,
His Life was poison'd by the *mortal* Tree :
He eat—*he fell*—*he dy'd*—'Tis all the same;
 One Loss of Life under a triple Name.

No Test was made by *positive Command*,
 Merely to try if he would fall or stand,
 Like *that*, the serpentine Satanic Snare,
 Of which the Man was bidden to beware.
Eat not thereof, or *thou wilt surely die*,
 Was spoken to *prevent*, and not to *try* ;
 To guard the Man against his subtle Foe,
 Who sought to teach him *what 'twas Death to*
know.

Death to his pristin, *Spirit-life* divine,
 And *Separation* from its sacred Shrine ;

The

The pure, unmix'd, incorruptible Throne,
 Wherein God's Image first embody'd shone;
 Tho' form'd to rule the new-created Scene,
 Built from the *Chaos* of a former Reign;
 To bring the Wonders of this World to View,
 And antient Glories to an Orb renew;
 He also had, as being to command,
 See, and be seen, in this new-formed Land,
 This intermediate temporary Life,
 Where only, Good and Evil are at Strife,
 Outward corporeal Form, whereby he saw,
 And heard, and spoke, and gave to all Things
 Law;

They none to him—His far superior Mind
 Was, as he pleas'd, united or disjoin'd:
 So far united, that all *Good* was gain'd;
 So far disjoin'd, that *Evil* was restrain'd:
 It could not reach him—for, before his Fall,
 Nothing could hurt this human Lord of All,
 No more than *Satan*, or the Serpent cou'd,
 If in his First Creation he had stood.

Such was his blest Estate—wherein is found
 Of *Adam's* happy Ignorance the Ground.
 His outward Body, and each outward Thing,
 From whence alone both Good and Ill could spring,
 Could not affect, while he was free from Sin,
 The Life of the celestial Man *within*.
 Glorious Condition! which, howe'er, imply'd,
 That Man, at first plac'd in it, must be try'd:

Not

Not from God's Will, or arbitrary Voice:
 His Trial follow'd from his *Pow'r of Choice*.
 God will'd him That, *Himself* was to *re-will*,
 And the divine Intentions to fulfil;
 To use his outward Body as a Means,
 Whereby to raise in Time and Place the Scenes
 That should restore the *once* angelic Orb,
 And all its Evil introduc'd absorb.

Evil, that, prior to the Fall of Man,
 From him, whose *Name in Heav'n* is lost, began.
Moses has plainly *hinted* at the Fiend;
 Whose Malice in a borrow'd Shape was screen'd:
 Who, under Reason's plausible Disguise,
 Taught our First Parents to be worldly wise:
 Succeeding Lights have risen up to show
 Of God and Man, more *openly*, the Foe.

He, *once* a thron'd *Archangel*, had the Sway
 Far as this Orb of our created Day;
 Where, then, no Sun was wanted to give Light,
 No Moon to chear yet undiscover'd Night;
 Immensely luminous his total Sphere,
 All Glory, Beauty, Brightness, ev'ry-where:
Ocean of Bliss, a limpid *crystal Sea*,
 Whose Height and Depth its Angels might survey;
 Call forth its Wonders, and enjoy the Trance
 Of Joys perpetual thro' its whole Expanse:
 Ravishing Forms arising without End
 Would, in Obedience to their Wills, ascend;
 Change

Change and unfold fresh Glories to their View,
And tune the *Hallelujah* Song anew.

If, when we cast a thoughtful, thankful Eye
Towards the Beauties of an Ev'ning Sky,
Calm we admire, thro' the ethereal Field,
The various Scenes that even *Clouds* can yield;
What huge Delight must *Nature's Fund* afford,
Where all the rich *Realities* are stor'd,
Which God produces from its vast Abyss,
To his own Glory, and his Creatures Blis?

His Glory, first, *all Nature* must display,
Else how to Blis could Creatures know the Way?
Order, thro' all Eternity, requires,
That to his Will they subject their Desires;
That, with all Meekness, the created Mind
Be to the Fountain of its Life resign'd;
Think, speak, and act, in all things for his Sake:
This is the *true Perfection* of its Make.

Both Men and Angels must have *Wills* their
own,
Or God, and Nature, were to them unknown:
'Tis their *Capacity* of Life and Joy,
Which none but *they* can ruin or destroy:
God, in Himself, was, is, and will be, good,
And all around pour forth th' enriching Flood.
From Him—('tis *Nature's* and *Religion's Creed*)
Nothing but *Good* can possibly proceed.
That *Creature* only, whose recipient Will
Shuts itself up within *itself*, is ill:

Good

Good cannot dwell in such an harden'd Clay,
But stagnates, and evaporates away.

Thus when the Regent of th' angelic Host
That *fell*, began within himself to boast;
Began, endow'd with his *Creator's Pow'rs*,
That nothing could resist, to call them *Ours*;
To spread thro' his wide Ranks the *impious Term*,
And they their Leader's Doctrine to confirm;
Then *Self*, then *Evil*, then *Apostate War*,
Rag'd thro' *their Hierarchy* wide and far;
Kindled to burn what they esteem'd a Rod,
The Meekness and Subjection to a God.
Resolv'd to pay no hymning Homage more,
Nor, in an Orbit of *their own*, adore:
All Right of Heav'n's eternal King abjur'd,
They thought *One Region* to themselves secur'd;
One out of *Three*, where Majesty divine
Shone in its glorious *Outbirth unitrine*;
Shone, and will shine eternally, altho'
Angels or Men the shining Bliss forego.

Strait, with this proud Imagination fir'd,
To *Self-Dominion* strongly they aspir'd;
Bent all their Wills, *irrevocably* bent,
To bring about their devilish Intent.
How ought *we Mortals* to beware of *Pride*,
That such great Angels could so far misguide!
No sooner was this horrible Attempt,
From all Obedience to remain exempt,

Put

Put forth to Act, but instantly thereon
 Heav'n, in the Swiftneſs of a Thought was gone:
 From *Love's beatifying Pow'r* eſtrang'd,
 They found their Life, their *Blis*, their *Glory*,
 chang'd.

That State wherein they were *reſolv'd* to dwell,
 Sprung from *their Luſting*, and became their *Hell*.

Thinking to riſe above the GOD of ALL,
 The Wretches fell, with an eternal Fall;

In Depths of Slavery, without a Shelf:

There is no Stop in ſelf-tormenting *Self*.

Juſt as a Wheel that's running down a Hill

Which has no Bottom, muſt keep running ſtill:

So down their own Proclivity to wrong,

Urg'd by impetuous Pride, they whirl along:

Their own dark, fiery, working Spirits tend

Farther from God, and farther to deſcend.

HE made no *Hell* to place his Angels in;

They ſtirr'd the Fire that burnt them, by their Sin:

The Bounds of Nature and of Order, broke,

And all the Wrath that follow'd them awoke:

Their own diſorder'd Raging was their Pain;

Their own unbending harden'd *Strength* their

Chain:

Renouncing God with their eternal Might,

They ſunk their Legions into endless Night.

Mean while the glorious Kingdom, where they

dwelt,

Th' Effect of their rebellious Workings felt:

Its clear *Materiality*; and pure,
 Could not the Force of raging Fiends endure:
 Its *Elements*, all heav'nly in their Kind,
 In *one* harmonious System when combin'd,
 Were now disclos'd, divided, and opaque:
 Their *glassy Sea* became a *stormy Lake*:
 The Height and Depth of their angelic World
 Was nought but Ruins upon Ruins hurl'd:
 Chaos arose, and, with its gloomy Sweep
 Of dark'ning Horrors, overspread the Deep:
 All was Confusion, Order all defac'd,
Tobu, and *Bobu*, the *deformed Waste*.

Till the Almighty's gracious *Fiat* came,
 And stopp'd the Spreading of the hellish Flame;
 Put to each fighting Principle the Bar;
 And calm'd, by just Degrees, th' intestine War.
Light, at his Word, th' abating Tempest chear'd;
 Earth, Sea, and Land, Sun, Moon, and Stars, ap-
 pear'd;
 Creatures of ev'ry Kind, and Food for each;
 And various Beauties clos'd the various Breach:
 Nature's *Six Properties* had each their Day,
 Lost Heav'n, as far as might be, to display;
 And in the *Sev'nth*, or *Body* of them all,
 To rest from, what they yet must prove, a *Fall*.

For had not this disorder'd Chaos been;
 Had not these Angels caus'd it by their Sin;
 Nor had compacted Earth, nor Rock, nor Stone,
 Nor *gross Materiality*, been known:

All

All that in Fire, or Water, Earth, or Air,
 May now their *noxious* Qualities declare,
 Is as unknown in Heav'n as Sin or Crime,
 And only lasts for purifying Time ;
 Till the *great End* for which we all came here,
 Till God's *restoring Goodness*, shall appear ;
 Then, as the rebel Creatures false Desire
 Awak'd in Nature the *chaotic Fire* ;
 So when *redeeming Love* has found a Race
 Of Creatures worthy of the heav'nly Place,
 Then shall *another* Fire enkindled rise,
 And purge from Ill these *temporary* Skies ;
 Purge from the World its Deadness, and its Dross,
 And of *lost* Heav'n recover *all the Loss*.

Why look we then with such a longing Eye
 On what this World can give us, or deny ;
 Of Man and Angel fall'n, the sad Remains ?
 It *has* its *Pleasures*—but it *has* its *Pains*.
 It has, what speaks it, would we but attend,
 Not our design'd Felicity—an *End*.
 Sons of Eternity, tho' born on Earth,
 There is within us a *celestial Birth* ;
 A Life that waits the *Efforts of our Mind*,
 To raise itself within this *outward Rind*,
 This *Husk of ours*, this stately *stalking Clod*,
 Is not the Body that we have from God :
 Of Good and Evil 'tis the *mortal Crust* ;
 Fruit of *Adamical* and *Eval Lust* ;

By

By which the Man, when heav'nly Life was ceas'd,
 Became an helpless, naked, biped Beast:
 Forc'd, on a *cursed Earth*, to sweat and toil;
 To *Brutes* a native, *Him* a foreign Soil:
 And, after all his Years employ'd to know
 The *Satisfactions* of a Life so low,
 Nine hundred, or Nine hundred thousand, past,
Another Death to come, and *Hell*, at last---
 ---But for that new mysterious *Birth of Life*;
 That *promis'd Seed* to *Adam* and his *Wife*;
 That *quick'ning Spirit* to a poor dead *Soul*;
 Not *Part* of Scripture Doctrine, but *the Whole*;
 Which Writers, *figuring* away, have left
 A mere dead Letter, of all Sense bereft;
 But for that *only Help* of Man forlorn,
 The *Incarnation* of the *VIRGIN-BORN*.

This *Serpent-Bruiser*, Son of *GOD* and *Man*,
 Who, from the first, his saving Work began,
 Revers'd, in full Maturity of Time,
 In his own SACRED PERSON, *Adam's Crime*;
 Brought human Nature from its deadly Fall,
 And made Salvation possible for *All*.

Without acknowledging that *Adam dy'd*,
 Scripture throughout is, in Effect, deny'd:
 All the whole Process of *Redeeming Love*,
 Of *Life*, of *Light*, and *Spirit from above*,
 Loses, by Learning's *piteous Pretence*
 Of *Modes*, and *Metaphors*, its real Sense:

All

All the glad Tidings in the Gospel found,
Are sunk in empty and unmeaning Sound.

If, by the First Man's Sin, we understand
Only some Breach of absolute Command
Half-punish'd, half-remitted, by a Grace
Like that which takes in human Acts a Place ;
The more we write, the more we still expose
The Christian Doctrine to its reas'ning Foes :
But, once convinc'd, that *Adam*, by his Crime,
Fell from *eternal Life* to that of *Time* ;
Stood on the Brink of *Death eternal* too,
Unless created unto *Life anew* ;
Then ev'ry Reason teaches us to see
How all the Truths of sacred Writ agree ;
How *Life restor'd* arises from the *Grave* ;
How Man *could* perish, and how *CHRIST*
could save.

Man perish'd by the deadly Food he took,
And needs must *lose* the Life that he *forsook*,
Not unadvis'd---the Moment he inclin'd
To this inferior Life his nobler Mind,
God kindly warn'd him to continue fed
With *Food of Paradise*, with Angels Bread ;
To thun the *Tree*, the *Knowledge*, whose sad
Leav'n ;
Would quench in him the Light and Life of
Heav'n ;
Strip him of that angelical Array,
Which thro' his *outward Body* spread the Day ;

B

Kept

Kept it from ev'ry Curse of Sin and Shame,
 From all those Evils that had yet no Name:
 That prov'd, alas! when he would not refrain,
 The Loss of *Adam's proper Life* too plain.
 Who can suppose that God would e'er forbid
 To eat what would not *hurt him*, if he *did*?
 Fright his lov'd Creature by a false Alarm;
 Or make what, *in itself*, was harmless, *Harm*?

O how much better he from whom I draw,
 Tho' deep, yet clear the System, Master LAW!
Master, I call him; not that I incline
 To pin my Faith on any One Divine;
 But, Man or Woman, whosoe'er it be,
 That speaks true Doctrine, is a *Pope* to me,
 Where Truth alone is *Interest*, and *Aim*,
 Who would regard a *Person*, or a *Name*?
 Or, in the Search of it *impartial*, scoff,
 Or scorn the meanest Instrument thereof?

Pardon me, Sir, for having dar'd to dwell
 Upon a Truth already told so well;
 Since diff'rent Ways of telling may excite,
 In diff'rent Minds, Attention to what's right:
 And Men (I measure by Myself) sometimes,
 Averse to Reas'ning, may be taught by Rhimes;
 If where One fails, they will not take Offence,
 Nor quarrel with the *Words*, but seek the *Sense*.

Life, Death, and such-like Words, in Scrip-
 ture found,
 Have certainly an higher, deeper Ground,
 Than

Than that of this poor perishable Ball,
 Whereon Men dote, as if it were their All;
 As if they were like *Warburtonian Jews*;
 Or, *Christians* nam'd, had still no *higher Views*;
 As if their Years had never taught them Sense
 Beyond——It is all one a Hundred hence.

'Twas of such Worldlings that our Saviour said
 To one of his Disciples, *Let the Dead*
Bury their Dead: But do thou follow me,
 He makes no more Distinction, Sir, you see,
 But that, with Reference to a *Life so brute*,
 The *speaking Carcases* interr'd the mute.

Life, to conclude, was lost in *Adam's Fall*,
 Which CHRIST, our *Resurrection*, will recall;
 And, as *Death* came into the World by *Sin*,
 Where *One* begun, the *Other* must begin.
 Why will the learned Sages use their Art,
 From *Scripture Truth*, so widely, to depart?
 But above all, a *Bishop*, grave, and wise,
 Why will he shut, against *plain Text*, his Eyes?
 Not see that Heav'n's Prediction never ly'd;
 That *Adam* fell by eating, sinn'd, and dy'd,
 A real Death, as much as *Loss of Sight*
 Is Death to ev'ry Circumstance of *Light*;
 Tho' a blind Man may feel his Way, and grope,
 Or for *recover'd Eyes* be made to hope;
 We might as well set Glasses on his Nose,
 And Sight, from common Helps of Sight, sup-
 pose;

As

As say, when *Adam's* heav'nly Life was kill'd,
That Sentence was not *instantly* fulfill'd.

Persuade your Mitred Friend, then, if you can,
To *re-consider*, Sir, the *Fall of Man*;
To see, and own the *Depth* of it; because,
Till *that* is done, we may as well pick Straws,
As talk of *what*, and *who*, the Serpent was
That brought the Fall, *not understood*, to pass.

One thing he *was*, Sir, be what else he will :
A *Critic*, that employ'd his fatal Skill
To cavil upon *Words*, and take away
The Sense of *that* which was as *plain as Day*.
And thus the World, at present, by his Wiles,
Tho' not in *outward Shape*, he still beguiles;
Seeking to turn, by Comments low and lax,
The Word of God into a Nose of Wax;
To take away the *Marrow*, and the *Pith*,
Of all that Scripture can present us with.
May Heav'n deliver from his winding Tours,
The *Bishop*, and *us all* ! I am, Sir,

Yours.

F I N I S.